

Message Text

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ACTION DLOS-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-11 ISO-00 ACDA-10 AGR-10 AID-05

CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 CIEP-02 OFA-01 COME-00

DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-07 EPA-04 ERDA-07 FEAE-00 FMC-02

TRSE-00 H-02 INR-07 INT-05 JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 NSF-02 OES-05 OMB-01 PA-02 PM-04 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-15 SAL-01 /148 W
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R 171531Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7306

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 04441

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PLOS, PFOR, GW

SUBJECT: FRG VIEW ON UP-COMING LOS CONFERENCE SESSION

REF: STATE 04241

1. PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE FOR NEW YORK, MFA STATE SECRETARY MOERSCH WHO HEADS FRG DELEGATION GAVE A PRESS BRIEFING ON LOS CONFERENCE AND THE PRINCIPAL GERMAN INTERESTS THAT ARE INVOLVED. MOERSCH DESCRIBED SEABED MINING AS THE PRINCIPAL LONG-TERM ISSUE, SUPERCEDING IN IMPORTANCE THE FISHERIES QUESTIONS, WHICH ARE NOW IN THE FOREGROUND AS WELL AS THE SHIPPING QUESTION. DESPITE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE UK AND THE OTHER EIGHT, HE SAID THAT THE EC WILL TRY TO TAKE A UNIFIED POSITION IN THE CONFERENCE, EVEN ON ISSUES SUCH AS FISHERIES WHERE DIFFERENCES SEEM TO PERSIST.

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MOERSCH ALSO STATED THAT THE LOS CONFERENCE IS

CHARACTERIZED BY THE NORTH/SOUTH ANTITHESIS
RATHER THAN EAST/WEST CONFLICT, AND THAT ON SOME
IMPORTANT ISSUES THE FRG SHARES COMMON VIEWS WITH
THE GDR AND SOVIET UNION INASMUCH AS THEY ARE
INDUSTRIAL STATES WITH LIMITED COASTS.

2. PRIMARY GERMAN LOS INTERESTS WERE ALSO DESCRIBED
IN MARCH 12 ISSUE OF DIE ZEIT BY HANS-JOCHEN MARTIN,
AN ECONOMICS MINISTRY EXPERT ON SEABEDS WHO IS FRG
REP IN COMMITTEE 2. THIS ARTICLE, ENTITLED "FIGHT
FOR THE SEAS OF THE WORLD - WILL FRG BE THE GREAT
LOSER?", REVEALS CONSIDERABLE SKEPTICISM ABOUT THE
OUTCOME OF THE CONFERENCE. IN THE ARTICLE, MARTIN
POINTED OUT THAT TRADITIONAL INTERNATIONAL LAW
SUPPORTING FREEDOM OF THE SEAS FAVORED THE FRG,
AND THAT GERMANY'S SHORT COAST LINE PLACES HER IN
A PARTICULARLY DISADVANTAGEOUS POSITION IN THE NEW

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SETTLEMENT THAT IS BEING NEGOTIATED. SUPPORT FROM OTHER LEADING INDUSTRIAL COUNTRIES IS NOT EASILY FOUND BECAUSE MOST COUNTRIES HAVING COMPARABLE ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE HAVE LONG COASTS AND THUS DIFFERENT INTERESTS. THUS GEOGRAPHIC SITUATION, DEPENDENCY ON RAW MATERIAL IMPORTS, AND SIZE OF THEIR MERCHANT FLEET FORCE THE GERMANS INTO ISOLATION. MARTIN'S ARTICLE ALSO REVEALS SKEPTICISM CONCERNING LIKELIHOOD OF FINDING SUPPORT WITHIN THE EC. WHILE EC MAY ACT UNANIMOUSLY ON SOME PROBLEMS, MARTIN THOUGHT THAT EC UNANIMITY ALL ALONG THE LINE IS LIKELY TO FAIL DUE TO THE DIFFERENT GEOGRAPHIC SITUATIONS OF THE MEMBER STATES. MARTIN RECOGNIZES THAT A NEW CONVENTION IS NECESSARY, FOR THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE WOULD BE WIDESPREAD NATIONALIZATION OF THE SEAS AND SEA RESOURCES. IN HIS VIEW, THE GOAL IS THEREFORE THAT OF WORKING OUT A COMPROMISE LIMITING THE CLAIMS OF COASTAL

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STATES TO THE CONTINENTAL SHELF AND ECONOMIC ZONE.

3. MARTIN DESCRIBES THE SEABEDS NEGOTIATIONS AS INCOMPARABLY MORE COMPLEX, AND WARNS THAT THE ATTITUDE OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES COULD DESTROY THE HOPES FOR DEVELOPING THE SEABEDS RESOURCES WITHIN A SHORT SPACE OF TIME. AS A MEANS FOR THE FRG TO AVOID WIDESPREAD NATIONALIZATION IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER, HE SUGGESTS WITHOUT ELABORATION THAT REGIONAL GROUPS FOR EXPLOITATION OF THE SEAS MIGHT BE SET UP IN WHICH COUNTRIES WOULD POOL THEIR INDIVIDUAL RESOURCES.

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